Infantry Combat Vehicles (BMP-I & II)

2477. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Infantry Combat Vehicles (BMP-I & II) were inducted in the Army in 1977 with a 15 years life-span requiring one mid-life overhaul;

(b) whether the overhauling facility for BMPs was meant to cover 100 vehicles and 210 engines;

(c) if so, how many vehicles and engines were overhauled till the end of 1998-99; and

(d) whether there is an accumulation of more than 110 BMP-I vehicles of 1981 vintage and around 500 engines awaiting mandatory overhaul?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The overhauling facility for BMPs was meant to cover 110 Infantry Combat Vehicle (ICV) BMPs-I and 210 UTD-20 Engines.

(c) A total of 56 ICV BMPs-I 70 UTD-20 Engines have been overhauled till the end of 1998-99.

(d) The overhaul of BMP-I vehicle and engines is done at 512 Army Base Workshop, Pune. The Workshop had a target to overhaul 305 ICV—BMPs I and 210 UTD-20 engines by March, 2002. 74 ICV-BMPs I and 452 UTD-20 engines are awaiting mandatory overhaul.

Development of attack helicopter by HAL

2478. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that HAL is developing a low cost attack helicopter for the Army and three such Helicopters have already been delivered to them; and

(b) if so, what are the details of this project and its relation with the demand for the Advanced Light Helicopter by the services?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited have developed a low cost attack helicopter called "Lancer" and three such helicopters have already been delivered to the Indian Army.

(b) It is a Light weight helicopter development as air mobile area weapon system with gun-cum-rocket pods and gun sight provided for accurate aiming and firing by the pilot. Lancer and Advanced Light Helicopter are different class of helicopters designed for different roles and demand for one does not affect that of the other.

Air crashes of IAF fighter aircrafts

2479. SHRI K. RAMA MOHAN RAO: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that crashes of India Air Force fighter air crafts are on the increase;

(b) if so, the crashes took place during the last three years; and

(c) what action is proposed to be taken to prevent such crashes in future?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.